

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OMB-01 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-14 DRC-01 AID-20 ABF-01 TRSE-00

SCSE-00 SCA-01 IGA-02 /151 W
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P 111230Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4138

INFO SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY

JCS WASHDC

AMEMBASSY SAIGON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI PRIORITY

COMUSSAG NKP THAI PRIORITY

UNCLAS PHNOM PENH 13786

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS:

SUBJ: AFTERMATH OF NEAK LOEUNG INCIDENT

REFS: SECSTATE 241161/102015Z DEC 73

1. THE NEWS STORY QUOTED REFTEL CONTAINS A NUXTER
OF INACCURACIES WHICH ARE DISCUSSED PARA 3 BELOW.

2. ANSWERS TO SPECIFIC QUESTIONS POSED BY SENATOR HUGHES
ARE AS FOLLOWS:

A. DID WE AGREE TO COMPENSATE FOR BUILDINGS DESTROYED?
NO RPT NO. U.S. GOVERNMENT DID AGREE TO PROVIDE FUNDS FOR
RECONSTRUCTION OF NEAK LOEUNG HOSPITAL. THIS HOSPITAL WAS
SEVERELY DAMAGED DURING THE BOMBING INCIDENT. IT HAD BEEN
PREVIOUSLY DAMAGED BY ENEMY FIRE DURING ATTACK ON NEAK LOEUNG.
HOSPITAL RECONSTRUCTION WILL BE COMPLETED ON

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15 DECEMBER 1973 PROVIDING A 200 BED CAPACITY. THE USG

ALSO PROVIDED SURGICAL AND OTHER EQUIPMENT NECESSARY TO OPERATE THE HOSPITAL. ADDITIONALLY, THE CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICE HAS BUILT A WOODEN ANNEX BEHIND THE HOSPITAL WHICH HOLDS ANOTHER 200 BEDS. THE TOTAL COST TO THE U.S. GOVERNMENT FOR THE HOSPITAL WAS APPROXIMATELY 75,000 DOLLARS IN COUNTERPART FUNDS FOR CONSTRUCTION AND 75,000 IN DOLLARS FOR THE HOSPITAL EQUIPMENT.

B. DID WE PAY FOR ANY MEDICAL EXPENSES INVOLVED?

THE U.S. GOVERNMENT DID NOT PAY DIRECTLY FOR ANY MEDICAL EXPENSES INVOLVED. HOWEVER, AS STATED IN SUBJECT ARTICLE, SORBUTUM MONEY MAY HAVE BEEN USED BY RECIPIENTS FOR MEDICAL EXPENSES.

C. DID WE AGREE TO COMPENSATE FOR DEATH?

THE U.S. GOVERNMENT AGREED TO SOLATUM TO THE SURVIVING VICTIMS AND TO THE NEAREST RELATIVE OF THE DECEASED VICTIMS. SOLATUM PAYMENTS WERE MADE IN THE AMOUNT OF 50,000 RIELS FOR DEATH WHICH EQUATED TO 217 U.S. DOLLARS AT THE TIME OF AGREEMENT OR ABOUT 2 YEARS EARNINGS FOR THE AVERAGE RURAL CAMBODIAN; 35,000 RIELS FOR SERIOUS INJURY WHICH EQUATED TO 152 U.S. DOLLARS OR 17 MONTHS EARNINGS FOR A RURAL CAMBODIAN; AND 6,000 RIELS FOR SLIGHT INJURY WHICH EQUATED TO 26 U.S. DOLLARS OR 3 MONTHS EARNINGS FOR A RURAL CAMBODIAN.

D. WHERE DID MONZQ FOR EXPENDITURES COME FROM?

MONEY FOR EXPENDITURES CAME FROM DOD FUNDS.

3. CERTAIN INACCURACIES APPEAR IN THE STORY AND THEY ARE DESCRIBED BELOW:

A. QUOTE: THE UNITED STATES STILL HAS NOT PAID FOR THE DESTROYED HOUSES AND OTHER PROPERTY NOR DOES IT INTEND TO ALTHOUGH NO ONE HAS COMMUNICATED THAT TO THE PEOPLE HERE WHO ARE STILL WAITING HOPEFULLY. END QUOTE. THIS IS INACCURATE SINCE THE GOVERNOR OF PREY VENG AND THE BA PHNOM MILITARY SUBDIVISION COMMANDER (RESPONSIBLE LOCAL OFFICIALS) HAVE BOTH BEEN

THOROUGHLY BRIEFED ON WHAT COMPENSATION, SOLATUM WILL BE PAID TO THE PEOPLE OF NEAK LOEUNG, AND WHAT CONSTRUCTION THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT WILL UNDERTAKE, I.E. THE HOSPITAL. WE WERE ASSURED BY BOTH THE LT.

GOVERNOR OF PREY VENG PROVINCE AND THE MILITARY SUBDIVISION COMMANDER OF BA PHNOM THAT THIS HAD BEEN

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COMMUNICATED TO THE PEOPLE OF NEAK LOEUNG. IN ADDITION, THE FACTS ON U.S. COMPENSATION HAVE BEEN BROADCAST OVER THE KHMER NATIONAL RADIO AND HAVE BEEN PUBLISHED IN THE KHMER PRESS.

HLB. QUOTE. MEMORIES OF AN AMERICAN COLONEL IN DARK GLASSES WHO CAME AROUND AND PAID WHAT THEY CONSIDER A GROSSLY INSUFFICIENT FUND IN COMPENSATION FOR THE CASUALTIES. END QUOTE. THE SOLATUM WAS PAID DIRECTLY

BY CHECK BY AN AMERICAN MAJOR ACCOMPANIED BY GKR OFFICIALS.
IT WAS PAID A FSOLATIUM AND WAS IN NO WAY BILLED AS TOTAL
COMPENSATION FOR LOSSES RECEIVED.

C. QUOTE. IN AN AGREEMENT SIGNED AUGUST 22D BY THE
CAMBODIAN AND AMERICAN GOVERNMENTS THE UNITED STATES
AGREED TO REBUILD A DESTROYED HOSPITAL AND PAY THE
SAAVIVORS OF THE 140 DEAD THE EQUIVALENT OF ABOUT 400
DOLLARS ACCORDING TO NEWS REPORTS AT THE TIME. END QUOTE

THE UNITED STATES, AS STATED ABOVE DID AGREE TO REBUILD A
DESTROYED HOSPITAL. THE UNITED STATES ALSO AGREED TO
MAKE A SOLATIUM PAYMENT OF 50,000 RIELS TO A SURVIVOR OF
EACH ODBTHE DECEASED. THE SOLATIUM PAYMENT WAS THE
EQUIVALENT OF ABOUT 217 DOLLARS AT THE TIME OF AGREEMENT.
HOWEVER, AT NO TIME DID THE U.S. GOVERNMENT AGREE TO PAY
ALL SURVIVORS OF THE DECEASED NOR WAS THE SUM OF 400
DOLLARS EVER MENTIONED.

4. CONSIDER STORY UNFORTUNATE AND THAT THE ABOVE WILL
BE HELPFUL IN ANSWERING QUERIES AND PUTTING THE SUBJECT
IN PERSPECTIVE.

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